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Sindh Provincial Assembly to Address Resolution Against NEPRA

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The Sindh Provincial Assembly (PA) is set to debate a resolution challenging the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA), signaling growing frustration with federal oversight of power tariffs and distribution. This article explores Sindh's push for energy autonomy and its implications.

The resolution, slated for discussion in the Sindh PA, reflects deep-seated discontent with NEPRA's centralized control, which many in Sindh argue fails to address the province's unique energy needs. NEPRA, established under the 1997 Regulation of Generation, Transmission, and Distribution of Electric Power Act, regulates electricity tariffs and licensing nationwide. However, Sindh's lawmakers, led by figures like Energy Minister Imtiaz Ahmed Shaikh, contend that this federal framework stifles provincial

projects, particularly those leveraging Thar coal, wind, and solar resources. Shaikh, in a 2023 statement to The Express Tribune, emphasized that Sindh's energy potential remains underutilized due to NEPRA's restrictive policies, such as the exclusion of renewable projects from the Indicative Generation Capacity Expansion Plan (IGCEP).

Sindh's response has been to establish the Sindh Electric Power Regulatory Authority (SEPRA), empowered to regulate local power generation and tariffs. The resolution against NEPRA underscores a broader push for decentralization, with Sindh asserting its constitutional right under Article 157(2)(c) to manage provincial energy resources. This move echoes a 2010 Sindh PA resolution opposing a Punjab power project, which highlighted water and energy disputes with federal authorities. Public sentiment, as seen in X posts like @EnergyWatchPK, reflects anger over high tariffs and load-shedding, blaming NEPRA's policies for favoring corporate interests over consumers.

The debate in the Sindh PA signals a rejection of federal overreach, prioritizing local solutions to energy poverty. Critics argue that Islamabad's policies, including those under the current federal government, often ignore regional realities, leaving Sindh to grapple with power shortages despite its resource wealth. The resolution calls for greater provincial control, potentially setting a precedent for other provinces like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which is also exploring its own regulatory body. As Sindh challenges NEPRA's authority, the outcome could reshape Pakistan's energy landscape, empowering provinces to deliver affordable electricity to their people.